



HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

Representative Carlos Lopez – Cantera, Majority Leader

Q & A

Student Success and Teacher Quality **HB 7019**

Question: How will this program be funded?

- Florida's \$700 million Race to the Top grant is funding implementation of most bill requirements. DOE will use grant funds to develop student learning growth formulas for statewide assessments and test item banks and growth formula models for school districts to use in assessing subjects and grades not tested by statewide assessments. Grant funds will also be used to assist school districts in the development of new educator performance evaluations.
- The bill establishes new priorities that must be met by school districts when determining educator compensation; however, it does not require school districts to expend any new funds on salary adjustments and supplements if funds are not available to do so.

Question: Why are these measures needed given the significant progress Florida has made in recent years?

- Florida has made great strides in national education rankings, but our state still falls short when compared on a global scale. We must continue to improve Florida's education system so our students are poised to compete in the global marketplace.
- The current educator compensation and contracting system favors employee labor entitlements over student performance. Reforms are necessary to place the focus back on students and create an environment that supports their success.

Question: How will the bill change the priorities used to determine teacher compensation?

- Currently, teacher compensation is primarily based upon years of service and advanced degrees, factors which research shows have little bearing on student achievement.
- By July 1, 2014, school districts must adopt a performance salary schedule which awards salary adjustments based upon effective or highly effective performance on annual evaluations. Salary supplements, if provided, must reward teachers who teach in challenging schools and subject areas.
- The performance salary schedule will reward teachers based upon results. After all, producing student learning is the ultimate goal of teaching. We should compensate teachers based upon how they achieve this goal.
- Likewise, salary adjustments will provide opportunities for less senior teachers to earn greater pay increases earlier in their careers. This will increase the likelihood that these employees remain in the classroom, rather than leaving the profession for higher-paying fields.

LAST SEEN:

HB 7019 was originally heard as a PCB and reported favorably out of the K-20 Competitiveness Subcommittee

CURRENTLY IN:

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**Education Committee:
488-7451**

**Chairman Proctor:
488-2977**

HEADED TO:

Once the committee hears and reports the bill favorably, it will be released to the calendar and available to be heard on the house floor.



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Question: How will this bill affect instructional personnel contracts?

- The bill discontinues professional service contracts for instructional personnel hired on or after July 1, 2011. These employees will be employed on annual contracts.
- Employees who have professional service contracts may keep them; however, those who choose to change school districts or opt into the new performance salary schedule will be employed on annual contracts.
- The bill specifies performance-based criteria for awarding annual contracts and just cause suspension or dismissal of professional service contract employees. The bill also clarifies “unsatisfactory performance” for professional services contracts. This reform shifts the focus of Florida’s instructional personnel contracting system away from entitled employment to employment based upon performance.
- The bill empowers principals to dismiss ineffective teachers more easily, thereby increasing the likelihood that every classroom has a quality teacher.

Question: How does this bill affect which employees are retained during a reduction-in-force?

- Currently, school district reduction-in-force policies prioritize retention of employees based upon seniority. The employee that is last hired, is the employee that is first fired. Often, effective teachers are laid off in favor of more senior teachers.
- The bill requires school districts to prioritize retention of employees based upon annual performance evaluations and educational program needs. Higher-performing employees must be retained over lower-performing employees, thereby enabling us to keep our best educators.

Question: How would the bill affect collective bargaining?

- The bill does not abolish or diminish collective bargaining. Teachers will still negotiate wages, benefits, work schedules, and various other items.
- What the bill does do is shift the focus of salary negotiations away from input-based factors like seniority and advanced degrees (advanced will still count toward locally determined portion of evaluations), to output-based factors like student learning and challenging job assignments.

Question: How will student learning growth formulas control for factors affecting students beyond the classroom?

- Student learning growth formulas will be designed to consider each student’s unique starting point. A student’s prior academic performance will be compared to learning achieved in a particular course, while controlling for variables such as attendance, English proficiency, and disability.
- The student learning growth portion of the performance evaluation must include growth data for students assigned to the educator over the course of at least three years. This allows evaluators to control for unexplained spikes or dips in student performance occurring during this time.



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Question: Why is socioeconomic status (SES) not considered in developing student learning growth formulas?

- The bill excludes consideration of SES, as well as race, ethnicity, and gender, so that lower expectations will not be set for these students. A student's past performance is the best predictor of current performance, not racial, ethnic, or gender differences.
- Research shows establishing high expectations for all students, while providing support for those expectations, results in high academic success.
- Including socioeconomic status in student learning growth formulas would surrender these students to the "soft bigotry of low expectations."

Question: How will you establish standards for meeting each performance level?

- The State Board of Education is required to adopt rules establishing discrete standards for each performance level (highly effective, effective, needs improvement/developing, and unsatisfactory).
 - The rules will establish a student learning growth standard that, if not met, will result in the employee receiving an unsatisfactory performance evaluation rating.
 - Additionally, the student learning growth standard must be met in order for an employee to receive a highly effective or effective rating.
- These rules and standards will ensure clear and sufficient differentiation in the performance levels and provide consistency across school districts.

Question: Is there an exemption for Hillsborough County in the bill?

- Yes. Based on Hillsborough County's earlier receipt of a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Grant, the bill contains an exemption allowing Hillsborough County's performance evaluation for instructional personnel and school administrators to be at least 40 percent based on student performance, rather than the 50 percent required by the bill. The district is also exempt from the bill's performance-pay requirements.
- These exemptions are effective for the 2011-12 school year and may be renewed annually by the State Board of Education if certain criteria are met. Among other renewal criteria, the district must use the state-adopted student learning growth formula for statewide assessments, as required by Florida's Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding for Phase 2 (RTT MOU). It must also implement a performance-pay system that rewards employees based on sustained student performance.
- The bill's performance evaluation exemption is identical to the exemption granted to Hillsborough County in the RTT MOU. The exemption enables the district to implement a performance evaluation that is at least 40 percent based upon student learning growth, as required under its \$100 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The district is exempt from the bill's performance pay requirements because it has already developed a performance-pay system for instructional personnel and school administrators through the Gates grant.